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ABSTRACT

History learning involves more than the mastery of cognitive skills and problem solving, because history learning always takes place within socio-cultural environments, and the material is charged with values and identity issues. This paper presents a theoretical perspective for understanding and designing history learning environments outside of school, and demonstrates its usefulness through two case studies from after-school history clubs. The location and design of learning environments for history is non-trivial. The paper reflects that situating such learning environments on the borders of school presents substantial opportunities as well as some important risks. In one case, a youth's identity as a participant in the after-school club positively influences his school identity and his future learning; while in the other case, a youth's identity and norms of the school influence his participation in the club and in many ways negatively influence his opportunities for learning. (Contains 23 references and 3 figures.) (BT)

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Historical Learning and Identity Development on the Borders of School

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History learning involves more than the mastery of cognitive skills and problem-solving, because history learning always take place within sociocultural environments, and the material itself is charged with values and identity issues. In this paper, I present a theoretical perspective for understanding and designing history learning environments outside of school, and demonstrate its usefulness through two case studies from after school history clubs. The location and design of learning environments for history is non-trivial, and I will show that situating such learning environments "on the borders of school" presents substantial opportunities as well as some important risks. In one case, a youth's identity as a participant in the after school club positively influences his school identity and his future learning; in another case, a youth's school identity and norms of the school influence his participation in the club and in many ways negatively influence his opportunities for learning.

A sociocultural view of participation in historical communities of practice

My perspective for understanding and interpreting human action follows closely Wertsch's (1991, 1998) notion of the sociocultural approach built upon the work of Vygotsky (e.g., 1978), Bakhtin (e.g. 1981) and Kenneth Burke (e.g., . From a sociocultural perspective, *action* is the fundamental unit of analysis, and an understanding of action requires considering agents' use of mediational means or cultural tools (Wertsch uses the terms interchangeably; I prefer the latter term and will use it throughout this paper). A complete interpretation of human action includes five aspects or moments, as adapted from Burke: the action, the agent, the cultural tools, the goals, and the scene. These correspond to the journalistic questions "what" "who" "how" "why" and "where". These aspects in themselves are not simple or unitary, but instead have internal tensions; thus agents seldom have but one goal for an action, but many explicit and implicit goals simultaneously (Wertsch & Polman, 2001). In addition, there is an "irreducible tension" (Wertsch, 1998) between elements of the pentad such as an agent and a cultural tool, such that the agent has an explicit one-time agenda for a tool's use in a particular action, yet the tool affords certain sorts of action and has a history that shades the meaning of the action. Other associations across aspects of the pentad are also

important. For instance, certain scenes are associated with certain goals, tools, and actions, and certain social categories of agents "belong" or don't.

From this theoretical standpoint, techniques of historical analysis can be usefully thought of as cultural tools that afford or enable effective means of doing the work of history. Wertsch (1998) makes a distinction between the mastery of a cultural tool, or knowing *how* to use it, and the appropriation of a cultural tool. In this use, appropriation refers to "making a cultural tool one's own", and is contrasted to resistance. One of Wertsch's examples serves to clarify. During the time period in which Estonia was a republic of the Soviet Union, it was commonplace for learners to *master* the official history of Estonia becoming a part of the Soviet Union. This official history included in part a characterization of a willing and committed proletariat movement within Estonia that desired Soviet statehood. Many of the individuals who mastered this history and could recite it effectively in school settings, however, had not *appropriated* it. In fact, they privately *resisted* the official history. In effect, it was not a part of their identity, and they would not choose to use it in settings except those that demanded compliance such as school and the workplace. This distinction between mastery and appropriation is useful, because it reminds us that both do not always occur: we may have situations of *mastery without appropriation* such as the Estonian case as well as *appropriation without mastery*. The latter case can be characterized as situations where interest and motivation are strong, but understanding is as yet lacking. It is of note that in many ways project-based learning influenced by Dewey (e.g., 1938) is a strategy whereby educators attempt to identify and/or establish appropriation, and use that appropriation to *drive* learners' desire for and achievement of mastery. In such cases, appropriation and the beginnings of mastery may serve as "preparation for future learning" (Bransford and Schwartz, 1999), or further mastery.

Like all cultural tools, historical analysis could be mastered in a setting like school (albeit not easily), but not appropriated by the learner so that they want to make use of the tool in other settings. As long as it serves democratic purposes, the goal of history educators *should* be appropriation as well as mastery, because we would like learners to make

consequential transitions (Beach, 1999) of historical analysis from school settings to the world outside school. For example, Wineburg (1999) has argued that historically contextualizing how certain universals such as the struggle for freedom play out in different eras and locations is a complex but extremely worthwhile activity. It is complex because the past is both different and the same: one must resist the temptation of presentism which assumes the past was just the same as the present, while simultaneously appreciating that the way the constants of the human condition play out in one context can teach us about how it can play out in other contexts. *Historical* contextualizing is worthwhile because it can teach us how to do the kind of *social and cultural* contextualizing that can enable us to live in our present world's diversity.

Since appropriation is an "identity project", identity development in historical learning environments becomes an important issue. Wenger's (1998) notion of "trajectories of identity" is useful here. In Wenger's view, individuals hold multiple simultaneous identity trajectories corresponding to communities of practice of which they are a part. These trajectories are not definite paths, but instead have a motion with momentum and influences based on where one has been and ongoing participation in the community. A metaphor for understanding this is a vector with magnitude and direction in relation to centrality or full participation in a community. Thus, legitimate peripheral participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991) are not yet central, but their trajectory tends toward the center to some degree (Wenger, 1998). This notion of identity trajectory relates to the notion of prolepsis in human activity (e.g., Cole, 1996; Stone & Wertsch, 1984). Prolepsis refers to presupposing future action based on past action in order to create present action; similarly, the presupposition of future identity is based on past identity to create the present trajectory of identity.

Further, *all* participants in a community of practice create the nexus of identity trajectories. In a community of learners such as a classroom or adult led after school club, a common assumption is that the adult or top of the hierarchy determines the direction of all, but this is mistaken. Before describing part of the identity nexus for a particular

setting, I turn to describing issues relevant to the design of after school learning environments.

The borders between after school clubs and school

Heath & McLaughlin's (1993) volume *Identity and Inner City Youth* provides an important basis for understanding the potential relationship between youth participation in after school clubs and their developing identities. In particular, they demonstrate the danger of situating after school clubs meant to foster positive youth identity development *within* schools. For many of the inner city youth described in the volume, school has been an environment of frustration and failure, so associations with school can lead to unproductive trajectories. In addition, school bureaucratic structures as well as norms may "invade" after school clubs they host, and undermine otherwise positive possibilities. For these and other reasons, Heath and McLaughlin have argued that after school learning environments for challenged inner city youth should distance themselves both literally and figuratively from school.

Conceptually, there are a range of choices for how after school communities of learners choose to overlap or intersect with the school community and grounds (see Figure 1). Heath and McLaughlin's model of complete separation is at far left in Figure 1. But although the Heath & McLaughlin research and lessons are important, there are several reasons why we should expect and may want the borders between after school clubs and schools to be closer or more permeable. The first reason is pragmatic: schools have valuable, well-outfitted facilities. Even when organizers of after school activities wish to avoid schools, they often have few other potential meeting places. Libraries present issues such as a desire for order and quiet often at odds with open, social activity (Cole, 1996). Community-based organizations such as boys and girls clubs are often the best alternative, but for high-tech clubs these may not have the same level of computer facilities that comparable schools do. The second reason complete separation as shown at left may not be desirable has to do with the nature of the opportunity for change. If there is a minimal level of overlap, there is a possibility of club participation influencing the

school identity of youth as perceived by themselves and by school personnel, and also of club activity influencing the kinds of activities that school personnel see as productive for learning. If, however, the school and after school club are "tightly coupled" in terms of physical location and conducting traditionally "school-like" activities, the opportunities for transformation are minimized for academically challenged students. In hopes of influencing school and non-school identity and preparation for future learning, I have been exploring after school clubs that have moderate overlap with school as shown in Figure 1. By holding after school clubs "on the borders of school" but not subsumed by school, I hope to foster a more transformative experience for participating youth.

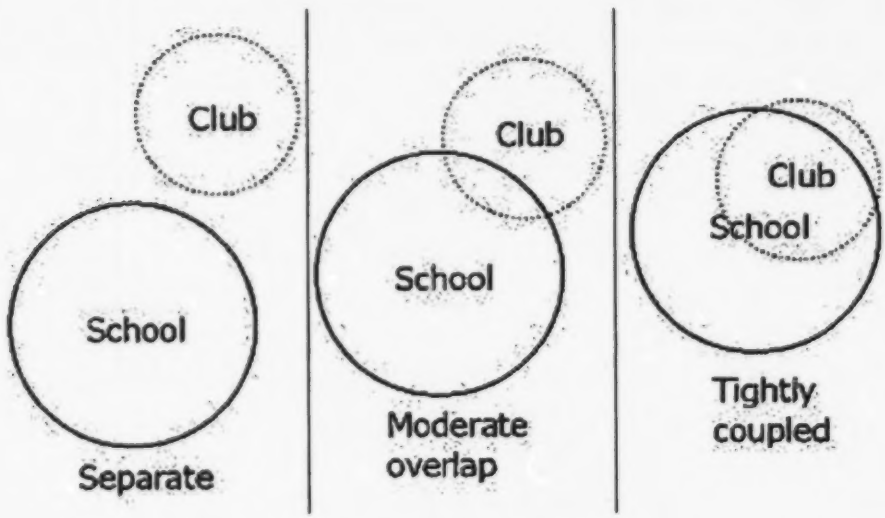

Figure 1: Overlap of after school club and school communities of learners

Identity Trajectories as History Learners and School Students

Returning to Wenger's (1998) notion of identity trajectories, the goal I have thus been exploring in after school history clubs is to positively influence the identity trajectories of participating youth, in terms of their identity as history learners both inside and outside of school, and their identities as school students. Figure 2 shows a schematic representation of a moment in time representing different youth identity trajectories. The third dimension of time is in this case not represented, but would stretch in a cylinder in front

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of and behind the page. The history learner and school student identities are shown to overlap because in practice they often overlap, but do not always.

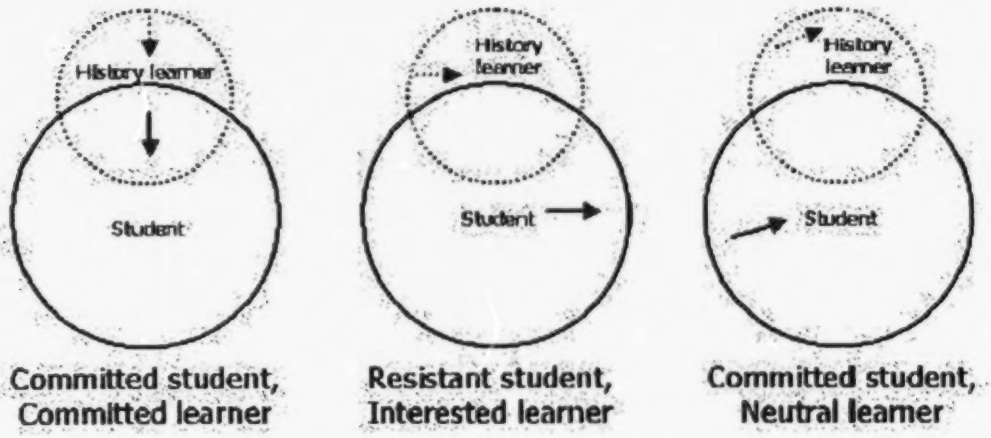

Figure 2: Possible snapshots of children's identity trajectories

A case of a committed and interested student and learner is shown at left in Figure 2. This is the sort of child who presents fewer challenges. A case of a resistant student who is interested in learning history, but only outside school, is shown in the middle graphic. A case of a youth who is not particularly interested in history, but will commit to learning it when in school because of a general commitment to school, is shown at right. The case studies to be discussed below fall into the latter two categories.

As mentioned previously, history educators in many ways hope to encourage youth to appropriate historical analysis and interpretation tools for use in multiple contexts, including but not limited to school. As growing numbers of researchers have pointed out, the classical notion of transfer as identity of "common elements" is insufficient to explain the interpretive, sociocultural embeddedness of cultural tool use (e.g., Beach, 1999; Bransford & Schwartz, 1999; Dyson, 1999; Pea, 1987). I prefer Beach's (1999) notion of "consequential transition" across borders as a replacement for the notion of transfer. For the kind of historical learning and identity under consideration here, the scenes of school,

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organized after school environments like clubs, and home are particularly relevant. In the school setting, the "cultural tools" of historical analysis and interpretation are "lying around in the scene" naturally, but they may have to be brought *into* out of school scenes by agents. One key goal of history-oriented after school clubs could be to create moments of action that foster commitment as a history learner and club member, and "cross the border" to foster commitment as student, as shown in Figure 3.

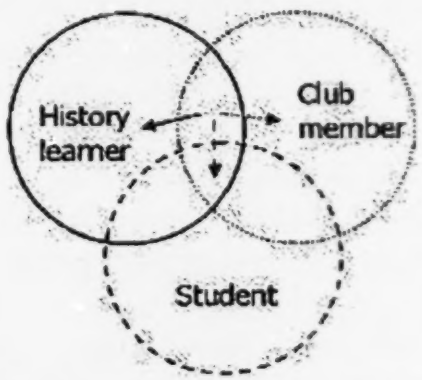

Figure 3: Ideal identity trajectory fostered by after school club participation[1]

Now that I have described my frameworks and goals for after school history clubs, I turn to describing the specific scenes for the case study research described here.

Research Setting and Methods

From February of 1998 through May of 1999, I directed two after school clubs "on the borders" of school in a large Midwestern city, as part of a research project sponsored by the James S. McDonnell Foundation. The clubs were designed with James Wertsch and were influenced by the Fifth Dimension model of after school clubs (Cole, 1996) and the Computer Clubhouse at the Boston Computer Museum (Resnick & Rusk, 1996).

[1] Note that the schematic diagrams in Figures 1-3 mask important elements of complexity for the sake of representational clarity. In particular, communities of practice and identities are neither monolithic across time nor in particular moments. Thus, the representation of a single "history learner" identity at a given moment in Figures 2 and 3 is a simplification of tentative negotiated identity, and the representation of a single "school" and "club" community of practice is a simplification of a continually negotiated, developing scene or context.

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In our "HistoryWeb" clubs, youth learned about historical struggles for freedom in their local community, including abolitionism and the underground railroad learned, and produced web pages about that history and themselves. One club included youth aged 10-12 years old from a semi-urban public elementary school, and the other club included youth aged 12-14 years old from an urban public middle school. Each club met in their respective school's library, which was equipped with Macintosh computers and the web browsing and editing program Netscape Gold (version 3.1). At each site, 5-8 racially and economically diverse children participated in after school sessions lasting approximately an hour and half. All participants were volunteers recruited through a flyer distributed by the school, and no selection criteria were used. Participants included academically successful and unsuccessful youth. There were three rounds of clubs consisting of around eight sessions per round, corresponding to the Spring 1998, Fall 1998, and Spring 1999 semesters. During each semester, I instructed a course entitled "Informal Learning Environments" at a nearby private university, and each semester around five undergraduate students taking the course served as adult mentors and facilitators at each site as part of required course work. The undergraduates were predominantly white middle class 18-20 year old education students (2/3 female and 1/3 male), and I am a white male.

My research methods are what I term interpretive case study (Polman, 2000). The term *interpretive* refers to any form of participant observational research that is centrally concerned with the role of meaning in social life, enacted in local situations (Erickson, 1986). The data sources for the case study research are written field notes taken by the author and the undergraduate students, videotapes, copies of web pages archived after each session, and audiotaped and transcribed interviews of the two focus children who are described in the following sections. With the exception of the author, all individuals are identified by pseudonyms.

The case of Bobby: Club crossing the border to school

10 year old "Bobby" was in the middle of 4th grade when he joined the HistoryWeb club

shortly after the beginning of the Spring 1998 session. His parents were Caribbean-American and Hispanic. When asked a year later to describe himself at the time of his joining the club, he said, "I had a C in social studies … and I was real bad at it." The school principal described Bobby as "a good kid who had fallen in with a tough crowd" of late. He had begun to have behavior problems and academic problems in school, and the principal hoped he would respond to the influence of some positive adult male role models (all the teachers in the elementary school were women). As she put it, she hoped "something positive to do with his energy" would help.

A few weeks into the Spring 1998 sessions of the after school club, the 4th and 5th grade participants in the after school club worked on the construction of a web-based historical simulation game or re-enactment of traveling on the Underground Railroad. The activity grew out of the youths' familiarity with and fondness for historical simulation games like "Oregon Trail." The activity structure was such that each child and undergraduate mentor chose a topic related to the Underground Railroad, and then they storyboarded and tried to create historically accurate linked computer screens for their topic based on print background material provided by the club leader (the author). After all screens were created, I stitched them together into a traversable whole. In the first game creation session, Bobby chose the topic of "river crossing", and with some help got started. His mentor's description was as follows:

> I asked [Bobby] if he wanted to start working on our underground RR game and he gave a fairly enthusiastic "sure" … I asked him if he had an idea of what he wanted to do with his rivercrossing topic, and he started typing away. He wasn't sure how to organize all of his ideas on the web page when I brought it to his attention that he didn't have to get it all onto just one page. Bobby looked fairly perplexed by this. Once I got the pieces of paper, wrote each of ideas in them and we put them out on the table, he quickly understood how we would be able to make several pages that could be connected. Bobby took this concept and flew with it right away. He suddenly had tons of ideas, almost too many to use. We really didn't have too many problems. In fact Bobby had already read through a

lot of the materials that Joe had provided in the folder, and had ideas of ways to use the info in his part of the game, and did so.

By the end of one session, Bobby planned out a relatively elaborate web of choices and screens, with his mentor scaffolding him in a manner in line with descriptions of work in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). Bobby's screens used minimal colored minimal text and allowed for forced choice branching on each screen. One screen asked for the season in which they would travel, and if winter was chosen the choice of crossing on the ice as in the well-known Harriett Beecher Stowe was presented on the next screen. Due to his enthusiasm and progress, Bobby's work began to serve as a model for other youth in the club, both older and the same age. Others strove to create interesting choices and screens, and different youth began to introduce new innovations such as pictures. By the end of the eight weeks, we had a workable simulation from the whole group's efforts.

In part to recognize his leadership, Bobby was chosen to represent his school in the Summer of 1998 on a special trip to Washington DC for the unveiling of the African-American Civil War Memorial by the National Park Service. The trip included numerous first for Bobby, including flying on an airplane, riding a city train from Baltimore to Washington. Along the way, Bobby's interest in his own family history and American history grew, and he had opportunities to discuss these issues and broaden his horizons. During the Fall of 1998 and the Spring of 1999, Bobby continued to participate in the HistoryWeb clubs. He was also recognized in a local paper and within his school for his role in representing his school on the trip. Pictures of Bobby with his local congressman and the attorney general of the United States were displayed in the school library. Bobby's participation in the after school club included more personal web pages and descriptions of photos and events from the trip, as well as field trip the entire group took to a local Black History museum and underground railroad sites.

In an interview at the end of the second year, Bobby assessed his history-related school work as follows: "This year we already did all the stuff in social studies that we went

over in the computer club, so I can whiz through and get A's and B's." From my standpoint as a researcher, Bobby's statement is an unsupportable claim about Bobby transitioning knowledge gained in the after school club to the school. Even absent classroom observation, it is simply not the case that approximately thirty-six hours of after school learning matched the fifth grade social studies curriculum. The club activities in fact "covered" little "factual content," and Bobby had relatively little opportunity to master historical inquiry in just a few hours of club time and a trip.

So how did participation in the club help Bobby "whiz through" social studies in fifth grade? A better explanation would be that club participation and recognition led Bobby to take on the identity of a "good social studies student," and the activities made him "prepared for future learning" in the sense of mastering school-based material. Bobby's positive stance and greater sense of self-efficacy likely drove his mastery of school-based social studies, and he could bring the cultural tools of using sources and considering the context of historical events from the after school club scene to the school. He probably could not be said to have mastered the historical tools in the club, but instead was prepared to master them when given further opportunity to work with them in class time. In addition to this consequential transition of history tools, Bobby had made transitions of computer tool use across after school, home, and school.

Although Bobby's case was far from typical, it serves to illustrate how situating after school clubs having moderate overlap with school present opportunities for transformations in school identity. In particular, Bobby shows how a somewhat resistant student but interested history learner can develop into a more committed student and committed history learner. Richard's case demonstrates some of the problems that may develop for a committed student and more neutral history learner.

The Case of Richard: School crossing the border to club

"Richard," an African-American in the eighth grade, was characterized by school personnel such as the principal and curriculum coordinator as a good, committed student.

He did not exhibit a very strong interest in or appropriation of history, although he had a strong interest in computers and the Internet, as well as in rap music. In the after school HistoryWeb club, Richard was paired with "Sarah," a white preservice teacher in her sophomore year of college. During the Fall 1998 semester described here, the youth and adults created personal web pages and web pages on topics of their choice related to struggles against abolitionism.

During the first of eight after school session in the Fall 1998 semester, Richard decided to focus on "freedom", with no further specification. In the Informal Learning Environments class, I had encouraged undergraduates to "build on students' interests" such as rap music. I had hoped we could build on some of the ideas of "culturally responsive curriculum", which is intended to build positive learning experiences on the cultural capital and cultural practices of non-European-American groups (e.g., Lee, 1995; Pinkard, 199x). In the second week, Sarah suggested he think about tying his personal interest in rap music to the topic of freedom. As Sarah related it,

> We talked about how he could tie music in to his idea of freedom, since he's so interested in that topic. Maybe he could find a song from the time period of the Underground Railroad, or find a song with lyrics about slavery or freedom. He got excited about that. We also said he could tie it in the present day and talk about/show how far musicians, especially black musicians have come.

As in Bobby's case, scaffolding from the college mentor helped guide the direction of Richard's work, but the efforts were more ambitious and open-ended. During the following week, Richard and Sarah selected a song about the Underground Railroad from among a collection I had assembled for club use. Their plan included analyzing the lyrics to the song, and "he'll state how the words make him feel, his reaction to it, and how he can/ can not relate to the lyrics" (Sarah's field notes). Following this analysis, Richard would "locate a song from the present day that deals with the issues of freedom/slavery", which they expected to be easy "since he loves music." He would analyze and describe

the modern-day lyrics in parallel fashion to the old song, and also "compare and contrast the lyrics of the two songs."

At the same sessions in which Richard and Sarah were beginning to implement this strategy, Richard was working on his personal, "fun" web pages. According to Sarah, "He drew a picture, but we both decided that it wouldn't be appropriate to put on his page." I had been encouraging students to include conversation in their fieldnotes, and Sarah related the conversation as follows:

> "Richard, who's that a picture of?"
> "a murderer."
> "A what? Don't draw that—he looks so scary."
> "I know, but I like to draw them."
> "Oh Richard, come on, draw something nice and not so scary."

As the leader of the after school club, I did not respond to the content of this exchange, but instead commending her inclusion of dialogue in her notes, prioritizing my role as the college course instructor. This exchange, however, was one indication of a school-like dynamic at work in the after school club: the adults declaring violent themes from street and popular culture "off limits" or at least "inappropriate" within the confines of the club which in other ways had different norms from the school. As research on discourse in classroom has demonstrated (e.g. Gutierrez, Rimes, and Larson, 1995; Stevens, 2001), such discourse moves, especially by more powerful participants, can create emergent contexts that strongly influence subsequent action. Thus, the "scene" of the after school club becomes flavored by school norms, and as we shall see has consequences later.

During week 4's session, Richard and Sarah worked on their analysis of the lyrics to a song about the Underground Railroad, entitled "The Ballad of the Underground Railroad." As in Bobby's case, Richard benefited from the scaffolding provided by his adult mentor, modeled on work in the zone of proximal development as we had discussed in the college class. Sarah described the session as follows:

> ...we moved on to analyzing the lyrics ... Richard grabbed a pen and paper, and we both sat next to each other and read through the lyrics, one stanza at a time. After each stanza he would write down what it meant. At first, I helped him a lot, but by the middle of the song, he was writing down thoughts on his own without my help. I was very impressed with how focused he was the whole time. We both gave a big sigh at the end and smiled at our accomplishment. We had just finished one of the hardest parts of the project. Now that that is written on paper, it will be much easier to just type it onto his web page next week. *(Sarah's field notes)*

The text Richard generated with Sarah's help was as follows:

> The song, "The Ballad Of the Underground Railroad," basically states that many slaves kept the way they escaped among themselves. Their certain acts of freedom relied on certain messages and codes. Different religions and cultures traveled on the Underground Railroad. All of the different passengers were escaping slavery. Most (all) slaves were punished with whips and steel tips. Slaves used disguises to hide their identities so their masters would not catch them escaping. They also hid for the time being away from their masters, until the Freedom Train alarm sounded. Although the slave masters did not know about the Freedom Train, many people (slaves) did. However, they kept the secret so the slaves could have a better chance of escaping. *(extract from Richard's web page)*

With the "historic" song virtually complete, the focus turned to the modern rap song. At the end of week 4's session, Richard began writing down ideas of songs and groups who might have a recent song for his comparison. Sarah expected the following session to run as smoothly with these seeds: "next week it will be real easy to get started, find lyrics, analyze them, and compare/contrast them to the Underground Railroad song from today." Sarah was disappointed two weeks later when they had completed more of the technical work, but Richard had not chosen a present day song. As Sarah put it, "Richard is running into a lot of trouble picking a song, partly because a lot of the rap songs he is choosing, have bad lyrics that are inappropriate." In responding by email to Sarah's field

notes, I encouraged her to clarify what some of the candidate songs were and what their problems were, but did not receive a response. By the end of the following week's session (week 7), Sarah was frustrated:

> …Yesterday Richard and I had a goal: to get the history page finished … However, getting the page done included finding a modern day rap song to compare the Underground Railroad song to, which Richard had been trying to find for about 3 sessions now. I've had patience with him until yesterday- but it got to the point where we just weren't getting anywhere. He was messing around while he searched the web for a song, taking his time. I, on the other hand, didn't think we had any time to lose, and I just wanted him to pick a song already! ... *(Sarah's field notes)*

As commonly happens in open-ended project-based activity (e.g., Polman, 2000), time constraints began to play a role. Limited time often helps to focus activity, but can lead to friction as in this case. As Sarah described it,

> …He was being picky with his choice of songs, and when we found one he liked, they had inappropriate lyrics. (ex. talk of drugs) SO, finally we decided to scratch the song idea. Instead, we decided to have Richard just write about how things have changed since the last song was written about the Underground Railroad. That worked out great. I didn't help him at all with that, he actually wrote it all by himself. (I just helped with spelling.) So now "Sarah and Richard's History Hangout" is complete … *(Sarah's field notes)*

The exchanges that demonstrated Richard being picky and Sarah judging lyrics inappropriate are not available, but the school norm of the inappropriateness of violence, drugs, and gang references clearly played a role. In addition, this middle school along with many others did not welcome rap music in general. The level of both Sarah and Richard's participation in the decision to scratch the recent song are also unclear, but the

text on the web page stated, "since we couldn't find a song, we decided to talk about the hard times of modern society." The analysis continued,

> Today's theory of slavery lies upon drugs, depression, and alcohol. Many people, mainly blacks, are faced with this type of, as we call it, struggle. I think the way things have changed since slavery times are much different than modern society, but not in such a crucial way. All in all they both are considered as hard times and captivity, the only difference is it's not as bad as it was for Slaves.
> *(Richard's web page)*

In the end, Richard was only able to articulate the contrast between African-American struggles for freedom in the past and present as a matter of degree: it's not as bad now as it was then. His use of historical contextualism is minimal, and I would argue that he largely falls into the trap of presentism: we can understand the past by just extrapolating from the present and changing the degree slightly.

A strong contrast to Richard's actual analysis is the potential of one of his choices. After each club session, I archived the contents of participants' computer diskettes. On Richard's were the lyrics to the song "Only God Can Judge Me", by Tupac Shakur (1996), which Richard later confirmed was a candidate. Some of the lyrics are extracted below:

> Only God Can Judge Me (is that right?). Nobody else, Nobody else.
> All you other *muthafuckas* get out of my business. Perhaps I was blind to tha facts, stabbed in tha back. I couldn't trust my own homies just a bunch a dirty rats. Will I succeed, paranoid from the *weed*? And hocus pocus try to focus. But I can't see and in my mind I'm a blind man doin' time.
> Look to my future 'cause my past is all behind me. Is it a crime to fight for what is mine? Everybody's dyin'. Tell me, what's the use of tryin'. *I've been trapped since birth.*

> Cautious, cause I'm cursed and fantasies of my family in a hearse. And *they say it's the white man I should fear. But, it's my own kind doin' all the killin' … (italics added)*

The problems with these lyrics from the standpoint of school norms is apparent, but their potential as a bridge to historical thinking are considerable. The inappropriate language such as "muthafuckas" and references to drugs such as "weed" make the song problematic. But the other italicized lines are powerful indicators of the historical reality of being "trapped" shared by slave times and present day urban life, while one part of the changed historical context is indicated by the phrase "it's my own kind doin' all the killin'." As Sam Wineburg has framed historical thinking, this kind of distinction is key. As he asks,

> … what it would take before we could begin to think historically about such concepts as prejudice, racism, tolerance, fairness, and equity. At what point do we come to see these not as transcendent truths soaring above time and place, but as patterns of thought that take root in particular historical moments, develop and grow, and bear traces of their former selves but emerge with new forms after successive generations? (Wineburg, 1998, p. 498)

Richard had missed an opportunity to more richly see the experience of others in the past, which Wineburg argues can enable us to more fully and richly appreciate others in the present.

So how do we account for the missed opportunities in Richard's case? Many of the problems are apparent when we look at the case through the lens of Burke's pentad. How were they trying to accomplish the project? Sarah and I were hoping that the cultural tool of rap music could be used to help build historical understanding, but as more time went on rap music seemed to be interpreted by Sarah and Richard as marginal to club identity. Why were Sarah and Richard doing what they were? In many ways, Sarah and Richard were trying to carry out a caring relationship (Goldstein, 1999); this created a related desire to avoid tension, and perhaps on Richard's part not offend while on Sarah's part

discourage negative themes. Who were the relevant agents? Richard's identity as a rap fan crossed a boundary of appropriateness for "official" club activity, given the references to violence and drugs. Sarah's identity as a caring, white, future teacher led her to interpret rap as dangerous despite her initial hope that it could be appropriated for good. What actions occurred or did not? Sarah and Richard were able to work together to create product, but they lacked the necessary scaffolding to engage in the sort of work I had envisioned of using rap as a bridge for practicing historical contextualism. I was in the position to provide more of this, but failed to see the opportunity in time (I did not find the Shakur song until *after* the club sessions were over for the semester, which shed a good deal of light on the sequence of events). Finally, where did this all take place? Here, the school location worked against the opportunities for historical learning and identity development, because Sarah made the institution's hostility to rap, violence and drugs prevalent through her repeated concerns with appropriateness.

Conclusion

The cases of Bobby and Richard demonstrate that developmental trajectories are influenced in complex ways by brokering practices and tools across the borders of school and after school. The complex work of interactive implementation is necessary, and if it is not well supported, problems such as Richard and Sarah's can arise and dominate. Thus, the borders of communities of practice both *en*able some possibilities and *dis*able or discourage others. As in Gutierrez, et al's (1995) work on interaction in the "third space" between out of school and in school norms, the productive development made possible by this complex work is worth the struggle.

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